



MINORITY AND/OR WOMEN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE

COORDINATOR'S CONNECTION

SUMMER 2009

Accessing NC Stimulus Money: Greenville Workshop on Stimulus Funding

The North Carolina Institute of Minority Economic Development (NCIMED) is partnering with community organizations to help NC business owners and non-profits compete for and win federal stimulus dollars. On May 20, NCIMED hosted "Accessing NC Stimulus Funds" in Greenville; one stop on their tour across the State. The purpose of the event was to aid contractors, suppliers, non profits, governments, and community leaders in understanding the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

North Carolina will receive approximately \$6.45 billion in direct appropriations, not including tax cuts. These funds are accessible through state agencies (e.g. NC Department of Transportation), federal formula programs (e.g. Community Development Block Grants), and federal grant opportunities.

Therefore, the majority of the funds will be funneled through existing channels with the most successful candidates being firms/agencies that have existing relationships with these entities, a proven track record of success in providing their product or service, and the capacity/capability to deliver results now.

Concurrently, there is a strong commitment by the NC Office of Economic Recovery and Investment (the Office established to track NC's efforts to comply with the ARRA) to provide equal opportunity for disadvantaged businesses to compete. As a result, efforts are being made to inform and notify D/M/WBE firms of opportunities through targeted advertising and outreach at workshops such as the May 20th event.

Six agencies were represented at the meeting to talk about agency-specific funding opportunities. They included: NC Department of Transportation, MidEast Commission, NC Department of Energy, and NC Department of Community Assistance. Pass-through agencies such as these are the ones to target to find out how they are using funds and if your business/agency fits into their plan of work.

Fortunately, with deliberate emphasis on accountability and transparency, several recovery websites are up and running to provide this valuable information. However, with such an overwhelming amount of information, be sure to be targeted and realistic. Go for what you know.

So how can you get involved? There are several avenues, but the quicker the better. Much of the money is tied to expense deadlines; a substantial portion of the dollars must be "on the street" within 120 days of receipt.

To get you started, view the "Quick Reference Guide" below and view the presentations of the presenters of the May 20th event by visiting www.ncimed.com.

Accessing NC Stimulus Funds Quick Reference Guide

DID YOU KNOW?

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act amounts to \$787 billion in government spending, incentives, and tax cuts.
- NC is expected to receive \$6.45 billion in direct appropriations, not including tax cuts.
- An additional \$1.5 billion is expected via grants.
- The White House estimates that the stimulus plan will create or retain 105,000 jobs in North Carolina.
- NCDOT received \$838 million in stimulus funding from USDOT.

WHERE THE MONEY IS GOING:

Income Support

- Tax Cuts
- Unemployment Benefits

Infrastructure and Jobs

- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Job Training
- Transportation
- Water & Sewer

Funds Guide Continued on page 3

CITY OF GREENVILLE, NC



A Message from the Coordinator...

"Tweet, Tweet...Tweet, Tweet!"

Just the other day I received an email from one of my good college friends who lives a few hours away asking me to "follow" him on Twitter. I couldn't believe it; a good friend that has avoided every other social media that has entered and exited this generation has invited me to engage in random chatter about his latest techno gadget or his summer vacation plans. Alas, I had officially been twittered.

Sad to say, but when I thought of tweeting, the song "Rockin Robin" always seemed to cloud my comprehension of this new Web 2.0 tool. But, with so much commotion surrounding this new communication frenzy, I decided to do some investigating.

A free, micro-blogging application, Twitter takes text messaging to the web by allowing users to "tweet" messages of 140 characters or less to their "followers" who subscribe to follow the news reels. Short, sweet, and to the point are the parade of tweets that come from everyone including celebrities and government agencies. Yes, you read correctly. Many government bodies including the City of Greenville are tweeting to provide short snippets of important information to their citizens in real time so that folks can stay up to date on what's going on in their government. In actuality, tweets are like mini commercials that promote yourself (think: celebrities), a new product or service (think: businesses), or the latest policy discussion of your City Council (think: governments).

My research got me to thinking...as most of you know, the M/WBE program works diligently to keep you up to date and in the know. From bid opportunities to educational workshops, events, and conferences, if I know about it, I'll share it. So, what better way to inform than to provide real-time communication on events and happenings important to you! I, like millions of others, have discovered the power of Twitter.

The M/WBE program is now tweeting on the City's page at http://twitter.com/GNC_CityInfo. Simply visit the website when you'd like to see what's up (all tweets are public info) or you can become a "follower" and receive updates automatically via the web or your mobile phone (be advised of possible messaging charges so check your mobile carrier). Also, if you're like me and need a "tutorial" to get started, visit <http://news.cnet.com/newbies-guide-to-twitter/> for a text version or <http://tinyurl.com/mt2rxu> for a streaming video. Before you know it, you'll be a pro!

Great. Now, you've officially been twittered!

Denisha Harris is the M/WBE Coordinator for the City of Greenville, NC and the Greenville Utilities Commission.

contact Denisha at

252.329.4862 or dharris@greenvillenc.gov

Community Strengthening Community: MBR Luncheon with the Bankers

On June 18th, The Minority Business Roundtable was pleased to host a "Luncheon with the Bankers" as part of its 2009 Action Plan to support its mission of "fostering supportive networks for the education, opportunity, and empowerment of minority business owners." Representatives from five community banks attended the luncheon sponsored by the City/GUC M/WBE Program and the Greenville-Pitt Chamber of Commerce.

The meeting promoted dialogue and allowed business owners to ask honest questions of bankers concerning financing and other banking services in a relaxed, casual setting. Questions ranged from the community involvement of banks to promote financial literacy to the latest products available as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The responses showed a willingness to partner with local nonprofits and civic organizations to help people understand the lending process; from small business loans to home financing.

Bankers were also aware of the latest small business financing program to hit main street known



Edward Nowell, Moments Production Photography; Butler Lewis, 1st Merchant Bankcard Services; Carlton Gay, EXCEED

as ARC, America's Recovery Capital program. This program, unveiled June 15th, is designed to give viable small businesses suffering immediate financial hardship some temporary relief by providing up to \$35,000 to be used on principal and interest payments of existing, qualifying debt/loans. There is no interest paid by the borrower and there are no SBA or lender fees associated. The funds are disbursed over a six-month period. Repayment is deferred twelve months after the last disbursement

MBR Luncheon Continued on page 4

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Upcoming Business Development Training & Workshops

August 12	How to do Business with Government Small Business Technology & Development Center ECU, Willis Building 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
August 13	Cash Flow Planning Small Business Technology & Development Center ECU, Willis Building 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
August 20	Minority Business Roundtable Greenville City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm (Feel free to bring lunch)
August 20	Open House: COG/GUC Upcoming Purchasing/ Contracting Opportunities for 2009-2010 Greenville City Hall Council Chambers 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
August 27	Introduction to Business Small Business Technology & Development Center ECU, Willis Building 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
September 10	How to Conduct Market Research Small Business Technology & Development Center ECU, Willis Building 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
September 17	Minority Business Roundtable Greenville City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm (Feel free to bring lunch)

To view the Summer 2009 Class Schedule for Pitt Community College Small Business Center, visit <http://www.pittcc.edu/continuing-education/programs/small-business-center/>. Registration is required for all trainings & workshops.

East Carolina Connection: ECU and HUB (Historically Underutilized Businesses) Vendors - Information furnished by ECU

East Carolina University offered a HUB vendor fair in March and follow-up surveys confirm it was a productive event. We also received some helpful comments that we plan to implement with our next HUB event (which we hope to hold in the spring of 2010).

The budget crunch in the State has definitely impacted our spending at ECU. However, we are still receptive to receiving information and questions from vendors who are interested in doing business with ECU.

Please call us at 252-328-6434 if you feel you have a service or commodity that we can use. Share your commodity area, and you will be referred to a Purchasing Specialist. We would like to remind vendors that the marketing of their products/services is their responsibility. We can facilitate that process by providing some potential user areas on our campus.

Funds Guide *Continued from page 1*

Aid to Communities

- Weatherization
- Child Care
- CSBG (ex: Homeless Programs)

Health & Nutrition

- Medicare
- Food Stamps
- Record Automation

NEED TO KNOW WEBSITES

Federal government Recovery Act information
recovery.gov

NC Office of Economic Recovery and Investment
ncrecovery.gov

Government loan opportunities
govloans.gov

Proposed federal contracts over \$25,000
fedbizopps.gov

NC Division of Purchase & Contract
ncpandc.gov

Federal recovery grant opportunities
grants.gov

Information for nonprofit seeking stimulus package funds
councilofnonprofits.org/stimulus

NCDOT opportunities
ncdot.org/recovery

Welcome to the New M/WBEs!

Bear & Co Signs & Lighting, Inc (Greensboro, NC)
Carter & Carter Construction (Greenville, NC)
EcoMaintenance (Elizabeth City, NC)
KeysKoncrete (Greenville, NC)
Mulkey Engineers & Consultants (Raleigh, NC)
VHM Construction (Charlotte, NC)
Ward Consulting Engineers (Raleigh, NC)

MBR Luncheon Continued from page 2

and is extended over a five-year period. Loans are made by commercial banks that provide SBA loans, not SBA itself. However, please note that the program is designed for existing, not to start up, small businesses. If you think your company may be eligible, please consult your local bank or visit sba.gov to find out more information.

The Minority Business Roundtable would like to thank Albemarle Bank & Trust, BB&T, East Carolina Bank, First Citizens, and Southern Bank for graciously accepting our invitation and providing timely, relevant information. We would also like to thank Rock Springs for sponsoring a delicious lunch.



"Putting Our Words to Work."

- Electronic Notification of Upcoming Bid Opportunities
- Business Locator in M/WBE Directory
- Business Development & Technical Assistance
- Quarterly Newsletter with the Latest Information

For more information, contact: Denisha Harris, M/WBE Coordinator at 252.329.4862 dharris@greenvillenc.gov.

Check out our information on the City's website, www.greenvillenc.gov under the Financial Services' Purchasing Division.



OPEN HOUSE AUGUST 20

**UPCOMING PURCHASING/CONTRACTING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2009 - 2010**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 20TH
@ 5:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
GREENVILLE CITY HALL**

Contractors, Suppliers, & Service Providers: You are invited to attend our "Open House" to learn about upcoming construction and purchasing opportunities through the City of Greenville and GUC.

For more information and to RSVP your attendance, please contact Denisha Harris at 329-4862 or dharris@greenvillenc.gov

M/WBE: *Putting our Words to Work...*

It is the policy of the City of Greenville and Greenville Utilities Commission to provide minorities and women equal opportunity for participating in all aspects of the City's and Utilities' contracting and procurement programs, including but not limited to, construction projects, supplies and materials purchases, and professional and personal service contracts.

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